

IRS Snooping Draws Fire Of Employees

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A group of employees of the Internal Revenue Service, which has been under fire for snooping, complained yesterday that they themselves are being watched too closely from within.

Delegates of the 27th annual convention of the National Association of Internal Revenue Employees adopted a resolution chiding the IRS for what was called overzealous pursuit of an integrity program.

The Service was "compelled through force of circumstances" to start an integrity campaign last year, the resolution said, apparently referring to the aftermath of bribery charges against some IRS employees in 1963.

Agree on Need

Since "reports of wrongdoing were giving us a high tarnish," the resolution said, "it was necessary to act and to give the action broad coverage—no one will deny this need."

We suggest that in the zeal of showing and devising safeguards, the pendulum could have swung too far.

"For instance, the rule of

not fraternizing with former associates now in the tax business seems harsh because of the warm and close friendships that were developed. Rules of this nature do not scour. If skullduggery is afoot a mere rule may not stop it."

The resolution also noted that revenue agents "are inclined to take umbrage over unannounced visits by supervisors" and objected to "the invitation of employees to inform on associates."

Another resolution said the IRS inspection service "in interrogating employees in private without witnesses, has been accused of intimidation, duress and threats against employes and infringements on our rights as United States citizens."

Urge Fairer Inquiries

The resolution called for fairer investigations and for the right of an employee to have a witness at interrogations.

About 690 IRS employees attended the NAIRE convention, which ended last night at the Shoreham Hotel. NAIRE represents about 25,000 of the 60,000 employees in IRS.

Thomas A. Ravielli, of Philadelphia, was re-elected NAIRE president, and Vincent L. Connery, Wichita, Kan., was re-elected first vice president. Charles F. Byrne, of Providence, R.I., won over Herbert E. Fisher, of Jacksonville, Fla., for second vice president.